

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Status Of Claims

Claims 1 and 3-17 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 are amended herein. No new matter has been added.

Objections

Claims 1 and 3-17 have been objected to because of informalities (e.g., insufficient antecedent basis in claims 1, 6, 11 and 16).

In response, each of claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 have been amended as shown above addressing the objections directed to the claims.

Applicants respectfully request that these objections be withdrawn.

Response to Claim Rejections under 37 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 37 U.S.C. 103(a)

In paragraph seven (7) of the Final Office Action, claims 6, 8-11 and 13-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,352,327 to Yano et al. ("Yano") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,598,951 to Ikemoto et al. ("Ikemoto").

In paragraph eighteen (18) of the Final Office Action, claims 1, 3-5, 7, 12, 16 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Yano in view of Ikemoto and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,217,149 to Takagi et al. ("Takagi").

Independent claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 have been amended for further clarification. In particular, each of claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 recites, *inter alia*, "the second print elements overlapping with each other in the scan direction are selectively activated so as to be alternatively actuated depending on a column position in the scan direction."

In the present invention as featured in amended claims 1, 6, 11 and 16, overlapping print elements (nozzles a and e, b and f, c and g, d and h) are selectively activated so as to be alternatively actuated depending on a column position in a scan direction. Referring to Fig. 13 of the present application where ink dots are formed in a solid printing mode, for example, nozzle e is activated in the leftmost column, nozzle a is activated in the second column from the left, nozzle e is activated in the third column from the left, nozzle a is activated in the fourth column from the left. That is, overlapping print elements (nozzles a and e) are alternatively actuated depending on the column position in the scan direction. The overlapping print elements and the columns have a relationship in which nozzle e is activated in the first and third columns, and nozzle a is activated in the second and fourth columns.

As Applicants understand it, none of the cited references (i.e., Yano, Ikemoto and Takagi) shows or suggests the inventive aspect of the present invention as shown above. In other words, there is simply nothing in the cited references that teaches that overlapping print elements are selectively activated so as to be alternatively actuated depending on a column position in a scan direction as specifically recited in claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 as amended.

Accordingly, each of claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 as amended is believed neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of the cited references (i.e., Yano, Takagi and Ikemoto), either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Applicants have chosen in the interest of expediting prosecution of this patent application to distinguish the cited documents from the pending claims as set forth above. However, these statements should not be regarded in any way as admissions that the cited documents are, in fact,

prior art. Also, Applicants have not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicants however reserve the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

Applicants believe that the application as amended is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

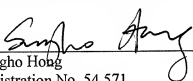
AUTHORIZATION

No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-5326). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: August 13, 2007

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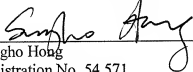
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